

Message Text

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NODIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT ISLAMABAD 6335 ACTION SECSTATE DATED JUL 01:

QTE: S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 6335

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MNUC TECH PK FR US OVIP

SUBJECT: PAKISTAN REPROCESSING ISSUE & NEWSOM VISIT

REF: STATE 167501

1. WE OFFER FOLLOWING THOUGHTS (READ GUESSES) ON QUESTIONS IN
REFTEL:

2. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON HOW CATEGORICAL FRENCH ARE IN CONVEYING TO
PAKS THEIR DECISION NOT TO GO AHEAD WITH ANY RPT ANY REPROCESSING
PLANT. IF PAKS PERCEIVE IN FRENCH DEMARCHE SLIGHTEST LEEWAY THAT
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 167953

COULD INDICATE FRENCH RECONSIDERATION LATER ON, E.G. "NEED FOR
FURTHER STUDY," ETC., THEN PAKS WILL STILL HOPE FOR EVENTUAL
REVERSAL. PAKS COULD THEN APPEAL TO SAUDIS AND OTHER ARABS,
PERHAPS, TO PUT NEW PRESSURE ON THE FRENCH; ALTHOUGH WE ARE
INCLINED TO DOUBT IT, THEY MIGHT ALSO GO PUBLIC WITH DOMESTIC
PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN DESIGNED TO PROVE THAT MLA IS DOING ITS UTMOST
TO ACQUIRE THE REPROCESSING PLANT.

3. IF FRENCH LEAVE NO ROOM FOR SUCH PAK HOPES, WE BELIEVE IT LIKELY -- BUT NOT CERTAIN -- THAT GOP WILL QUICKLY PERCEIVE THE EITHER/OR NATURE OF THEIR NEXT POLICY DECISION: WHETHER DOMESTIC REPERCUSSIONS AND ACCUSATIONS OF MLA WEAKNESS ARE MORE DANGEROUS THAN ABSENCE OF INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT FOR NATIONAL SECURITY VIS-A-VIS AFGHANS/SOVS. BELIEVE THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE OF A FAVORABLE DECISION -- IN TERMS OF OUR INTERESTS HERE -- PARTICULARLY IF WE ALL (USG, FRENCH, IRANIANS) MOVE QUICKLY ENOUGH TO EMPHASIZE THE INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC ECONOMIC AND SECURITY BENEFITS THAT CAN ACCRUE. WE BELIEVE THERE IS ALSO A GOOD CHANCE FOR ACHIEVING ABSENCE OF GOP PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT THAT THEY WILL GO IT ALONE.

4. A LOT DEPENDS ON GOP CALCULATION OF VALUE OF KEEPING LID ON DECISION WHILE OTHER STEPS PLAY OUT. ON BALANCE, WE KNOW OF NO REASON WHY TOP LEADERSHIP OF GOP WOULD FEEL COMPELLED TO GO PUBLIC IMMEDIATELY UNLESS (AND THIS IS A BIG UNLESS) THEY ARE FORCED TO DO IT BY A LEAK SOMEWHERE WHICH REQUIRES RESPONSE. WE WOULD ADD THAT WE THINK JACOMET CAN SLIP QUIETLY INTO PAKISTAN TO MAKE THE PITCH EASIER AND MORE EFFECTIVELY THAN ANY OTHER ALTERNATIVE UNDER DISCUSSION, I.E. AGHA SHAHI TO PARIS, WHICH POSES POSSIBILITY OF DELAYS AND LEAKS. HARD COMMITMENT TO FRENCH VISIT HERE WOULD ALSO HOLD FRENCH FEET TO FIRE AND ENSURE THAT DECISION IS CONVEYED AT HIGHEST LEVEL. AGHA SHAHI MAY NOT BE AROUND IN ANY EVENT.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 167953

9. THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT GOP WILL AT SOME POINT FEEL THE NEED TO DO SOME PUBLIC POSTURING TO MITIGATE DOMESTIC ACCUSATIONS OF WEAKNESS AND/OR A SECRET DEAL WITH FRANCE AND THE US. THE QUESTION IS WHEN THEY WILL START, NOT WHETHER. LEAKS TO NEWS MEDIA, FROM PARIS OR ELSEWHERE, COULD, OF COURSE, PRECIPITATE GOP POSTURING. IN ANY EVENT, HOWEVER, WE SEE REAL POSSIBILITY OF PETULANT DECISION TO LEAVE CENTO AND TO EXERCISE A BIT OF GOP'S PRESUMED "SOVIET OPTION," EVEN IN FAVORABLE SCENARIO.

6. ASSUMING ABSENCE OF LEAKS, WE BELIEVE IT LIKELY THAT THERE WILL BE A PERIOD OF SOBER EVALUATION WITHIN THE GOP BEFORE PAKS FEEL NEED FOR DEFENSIVE PUBLIC STATEMENTS. GOP WILL HAVE PRESUMABLY ANNOUNCED NEW COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ON JULY 5 (MOSTLY PRESENT "ADVISORS," RATHER THAN PROMINENT POLITICIANS); WE THINK THIS SOMEWHAT MORE BROADLY-BASED GOVERNMENT DIMINISHES A BIT THE POTENTIAL FOR SNAP DECISION BY A HANDFUL OF SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS NOW IN CONTROL OF THE MARTIAL LAW ADMINISTRATION (MLA).

7. THUS WE SEE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS ALONG FOLLOWING LINES (AGAIN ASSUMING CATEGORICAL AND TIMELY FRENCH STATEMENT TO GOP AND ABSENCE BEFORE AND AFTER OF PRESS LEAKS):

-- DELIVERY TO GOP OF FRENCH BOMBSHELL (WHICH ACTUALLY WILL NOT BE A SURPRISE SINCE SENIOR GOP LEADERS, IF NOT PAK PUBLIC AT LARGE, HAVE BEGUN TO SMELL A FRENCH RAT);

-- A PERIOD OF TIGHTLY-HELD GOP DELIBERATIONS (DURING WHICH I WOULD, OF COURSE, BE AUTHORIZED TO APPROACH GEN ZIA TO URGE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION OF NEWSOM-BORNE PACKAGE BEFORE GOP DECIDES ON FUTURE POLICIES -- UNLESS TIME INTERVAL BETWEEN FRENCH BOMBSHELL AND NEWSOM ARRIVAL IS SO SHORT AS TO RENDER MY DEMARCHE UNNECESSARY;

-- NEWSOM ARRIVAL AND DISCUSSIONS ON JULY 15/16 OF BENEFITS TO GOP; NEWSOM SHOULD BE AWARE THAT ATMOSPHERE WILL LIKELY BE SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 167953

CHILLY. PAKS WILL PROBABLY DISPARAGE PACKAGE, SEEING IT AS LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM SECRETARY VANCE'S OFFER AND AS LITTLE MORE THAN A RETURN TO BUSINESS AS USUAL, RATHER THAN AS A SIGNIFICANT NEW DEPARTURE. WE WOULD HOPE THAT DECISION ON FMS CREDITS FOR AIRCRAFT PURCHASE WOULD HAVE BEEN MADE IN WASHINGTON BEFORE NEWSOM VISIT SO UNDERSECRETARY COULD USE THIS, IF NECESSARY TO SWEETEN THE POT. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT THAT THE SHAH PLAY HIS HAND AT THIS TIME, I.E. APPROVE IRANIAN GUARANTEE FOR THE \$300 MILLION IN COMMERCIAL LOANS AND PONY UP A SIZEABLE SUM FOR MILITARY EQUIPMENT PURCHASES. IT WOULD BE PREFERABLE FOR THE SHAH TM CONVEY HIS GOOD NEWS AFTER THE FRENCH INFORM THE GOP AND BEFORE NEWSOM ARRIVES HERE.

-- PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT BY GOP OF LOSS OF REPROCESSING PLANT, PROBABLY IN TERMS NOT VERY WELCOME IN PARIS OR WASHINGTON BUT TOLERABLE;

-- AFTER A FEW WEEKS, A SETTling DOWN TO ADJUST TO THE NEW REALITIES -- BUT NOT WITHOUT CONTINUING RECRIMINATIONS, INCLUDING BHUTTO-STIMULATED ACCUSATIONS OF A SECRET DEAL BY THE MLA TO BARTER AWAY PAK SECURITY TO WHICH MLA WILL HAVE TO RESPOND. GOP MIGHT ALSO ATTEMPT TO STIMULATE PUBLIC EXPRESSION OF DISMAY BY SAUDIS, LIBYANS, AND OTHERS.

8. DEPARTMENT SHOULD REALIZE THAT WE HAVE VERY LIMITED INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES FOR QUICK INSIGHTS INTO PRIVATE GOP DELIBERATIONS AT THE TOP AND THAT WE SHOULD QUICKLY APPROACH HIGH LEVELS OF GOP TO INITIATE DISCUSSIONS AND DISCERN TRENDS FACE TO FACE.

9. WE RECOGNIZE, ON REVIEWING THE ABOVE, THAT IT HAS A BEST CASE FLAVOR ABOUT IT. WE BELIEVE THAT IF EACH STEP GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN -- WITH PRECISE TIMING VERY IMPORTANT -- WE CAN COME OUT OF SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 167953

THIS EXERCISE HAVING PRESERVED BOTH OUR NON-PROLIFERATION GOALS AND OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH PAKISTAN. IT WILL NOT BE WITHOUT COST, HOWEVER, AND NEWSOM COULD WELL FACE A BIT OF A BUZZSAW HERE DURING HIS VISIT. ANY ONE OF A NUMBER OF VARIABLES OVER WHICH WE HAVE LITTLE IF ANY CONTROL COULD UPSET THE TIMING AND THROW THE REACTIONS AND COUNTER-REACTIONS ASKEW, CAUSING THE PAKS TO TRY TO HAVE BOTH THEIR REPROCESSING OPTION AND AN ASSISTANCE PACKAGE. AND OF ALL THE VARIABLES, THE POSSIBILITY OF A LEAK IS THE WORST. SECOND WORST WOULD BE A FRENCH DECISION AGAIN TO DRAG THEIR FEET.

10. IF FOR ANY REASON THE FRENCH DELAY CONVEYING THEIR DECISION, SAY FOR A FEW WEEKS, THEN WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT NEWSOM NOT REPEAT NOT COME ON THE CURRENT SCHEDULE. WE WOULD SEE NO WAY THAT NEWSOM COULD HONOR THE FRENCH DESIRE TO BREAK THE NEWS THEMSELVES AND CARRY OUT THE MAIN PURPOSES OF HIS TRIP, I.E. TO REASSURE THE GOP OF US SUPPORT IN THE WAKE OF THE AFGHAN REVOLUTION AND TO HEAD OFF A GOP DECISION TO GO IT ALONE ON REPROCESSING. IF NEWSOM'S VISIT WERE TO BE CONFINED ONLY TO REITERATING AND EXPANDING SOMEWHAT UPON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE SECRETARY'S REMAKRS TO AGHA SHAHI IN NEW YORK ON JUNE 2 (I.E. THAT THE PRICE OF US SUPPORT IS RENUNCIATION OF REPROCESSING), THEN IT WOULD BE A GRAVE DISAPPOINTMENT TO THE GOP AND, IN OUR VIEW, WORSE THAN NO VISIT AT ALL. IF (HEAVEN FORFEND*) THE FRENCH RENEGE ON CANCELLING AND THERE ARE TO CONTINUE TO BE CONSTRAINTS ON US ABILITY TO HELP PAKISTAN, THEN THE NEWSOM VISIT MIGHT BE BETTER THAN NOTHING.
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